



U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

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News Advisory

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Sensenbrenner, Conyers Introduce Bipartisan Anti-Steroid Legislation

Bill Could Lead to Fines for Professional Leagues and Federal Tax Benefits Being Revoked if Leagues Fail to Comply with Attorney General's Testing Standards

WASHINGTON, D.C. – House Judiciary Committee Chairman F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-Wis.) and Ranking Member John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.) last night introduced bipartisan legislation to crack down on the continuing health problem of steroid abuse among professional athletes and the message it sends to amateur athletes. The "Professional Sports Responsibility Act of 2005" will be the subject of House hearings and consideration later this fall.

The legislation lists numerous legal and tax benefits that benefit the professional sports leagues and states, "The leagues have no entitlement to these benefits and Congress can revoke these benefits away at any time." This legislation affects the NFL, NBA, NHL, and Major League Baseball.

H.R. 3942 finds that "The use of anabolic steroids, performance enhancing substances and schedule I controlled substances by professional athletes poses a significant public health and safety concern not only for the players on the field, but also for the general public."

Chairman Sensenbrenner said, "Steroids abuse is a big problem, particularly among our youth. Experts estimate over 500,000 teenagers have used performance-enhancing drugs,

no doubt modeling their behavior after those professional athletes – their heroes – that use these harmful substances for career-enhancing purposes. While baseball has been by far the worst offender in combating steroid abuse, all leagues must do more. Thus, the time has come for the Attorney General to establish steroid testing procedures and penalties that the leagues should follow. Failure by a league to comply with the A.G.’s standards could result in both hefty fines for the leagues and the review by Congress to consider revocation of benefits granted to the league.”

Ranking Member Conyers commented, “There is no place for unlawful performance enhancing drugs in our society. Our legislation is a strong step forward on an important issue facing not only our sports leagues, but our nation as a whole and our children in particular. I look forward to moving ahead on this issue and working with the Chairman on hearings and expedited Committee consideration.”

Highlights of the “Professional Sports Responsibility Act of 2005”:

- Establishes a Federal Office of Steroids Testing Enforcement and Prevention at the Justice Department
- Requires the Attorney General to issue minimum testing standards within 180 days of enactment
- Authorizes a private nonprofit organization selected by the Attorney General to be the accrediting body for the leagues’ certification of compliance
- Allows the Attorney General to fine a league \$5 million for noncompliance with \$1 million fines for each additional day of noncompliance
- Requires the Attorney General to report to Congress on league noncompliance and make additional recommendation on specific action against a league for noncompliance
- Doubles the criminal penalties available for steroid offenses near sports facilities and for distributing steroids to athletes
- Allows the Attorney General to broaden the testing compliance to include additional professional sports leagues and NCAA Division I and II if the A.G. “determines that such additions would prevent the use of performance-enhancing substances by high school, college, or professional athletes.”

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